

REMARKS

1. Status of the Claims

Prior to this response, Claims 14-17, 20, 26-42, 52, 74 and 75 were pending in the application. Applicant has cancelled claims 17, 41-42, 52, and 74-75, amended claims 14-16, 20, 26 and 33, and added new claims 76-136.

2. Prior Cancelled Claims

Applicant thanks the Examiner for pointing out the erroneous inclusion of claims 18-19, 21-25, 44-51, 53-60 and 62-65 in the prior response, which were already cancelled in a prior response. Applicant has correctly labeled those claims, as well as claims 66-73, as cancelled above.

3. Rejection of the Claims Under 35 U.S.C. §102

The Examiner has rejected claims 17, 41, 42, 52, 74, and 75 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b), based on the contention that they are anticipated by one or more of U.S. Patent Nos. 4,414,037, issued to Friedheim, or 5,429,271, issued to Porter. Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejections. The Examiner has stated, however, that claims 14-16, 20, and 26-40 would be allowable, if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of their base claims. Notwithstanding the Applicant's traversal of the Examiner's rejections, and without conceding to the substance of that rejection, Applicant has amended the present claims to move the present application into present condition for allowance.

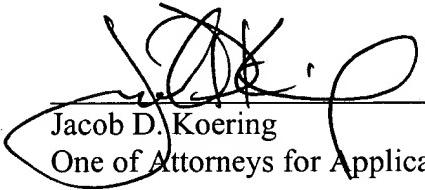
Specifically, Applicant has amended Claims 14, 20, 26 and 33 to place those claims in independent form, and has amended and/or added the remaining claims appropriately to depend from one of those claims. As such, Applicant submits that all of the remaining claims, including Claims 14-16, 20, 26-40 and 76-136, should now be in condition for allowance. Therefore, reconsideration and passage to allowance of all pending claims is respectfully requested.

Should anything further be required, a telephone call to the undersigned, at (312) 226-1818, is respectfully invited.

Respectfully submitted,

FACTOR & LAKE, LTD.

Dated: June 7, 2004


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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on June 7, 2004.

Jacob D. Koering